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# Tetela language

**Tetela** (Otetela, Kitetela, Kikitatela), also *Sungu*, is a Bantu language of northern Kasai-Oriental Province, Democratic Republic of the Congo. It is spoken by the Tetela people.

| Tetela | |
|---|---|
| Ɔtɛtɛla | |
| **Native to** | Democratic Republic of the Congo |
| **Region** | Northern Kasai Oriental Province |
| **Native speakers** | (760,000 cited 1991)[1] |
| **Language family** | Niger–Congo<br>▪ Atlantic–Congo<br>▪ Volta-Congo<br>▪ Benue–Congo<br>▪ Bantoid<br>▪ Southern Bantoid<br>▪ Bantu (Zone C)<br>▪ Tetela languages (C.70)<br>▪ **Tetela** |
| **Language codes** | |
| **ISO 639-3** | Either:<br>`tll` – Tetela<br>`hba` – Hamba |
| **Glottolog** | `tete1250` (http://glottolog.org/resource/languoid/id/tete1250) Tetela[2]<br>`hamb1245` (http://glottolog.org/resource/languoid/id/hamb1245) Hamba[3] |
| **Guthrie code** | `C.71`[4] |

## Noun classes

Like other Bantu languages, Tetela grammar arranges nouns into a number of classes. The ancestral system had 22 classes (counting singular and plural as distinct according to the Meinhof system), with most Bantu languages sharing at least ten of them.

| class | semantics | prefix | singular | translation | plural | translation |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **1, 2** | *persons* | o-/ɔ-/w-, a- | omfúnjí | *scribe, secretary* | amfúnjí | *scribes, secretaries* |
| **3, 4** | *trees, etc* | o-/ɔ-/w-, e-/ɛ- | ojja | *place* | ejja | *places; region* |
| **5, 6** | *various* | di-/dy-, a- | dihamvú | *fruit of Chrysophyllum lacourtianum* | ahamvú | *fruits of Chrysophyllum lacourtianum* |
| **7, 8** | *various* | ke-/e-, di-/dy- | kesashi | *chief* | disashi | *chiefs* |
| **9, 10** | *animals, etc* | Ø-/N-, Ø-/N- | mbódí | *goat* | mbódí | *goats* |
| **11, 10** | *abstract concepts, etc* | lo-, N- | lolémí | *language* | némí | *languages* |
| **12, 13** | *various* | ka-/k-, to-/t- | kashikɛ | *helmet* (from French *casque*) | toshikɛ | *helmets* |
| **19, 13** | *various* | °i- (complex morphology), to-/t- | jɔ́ndɔ́ | *???* | tɔlɔ́ndɔ́ | *???* |

# References


1. Tetela (https://www.ethnologue.com/18/language/tll/) at *Ethnologue* (18th ed., 2015) Hamba (https://www.ethnologue.com/18/language/hba/) at *Ethnologue* (18th ed., 2015)
2. Hammarström, Harald; Forkel, Robert; Haspelmath, Martin, eds. (2017). "Tetela" (http://glottolog.org/resource/languoid/id/tete1250). *Glottolog 3.0*. Jena, Germany: Max Planck Institute for the Science of Human History.
3. Hammarström, Harald; Forkel, Robert; Haspelmath, Martin, eds. (2017). "Hamba de Lomela" (http://glottolog.org/resource/languoid/id/hamb1245). *Glottolog 3.0*. Jena, Germany: Max Planck Institute for the Science of Human History.
4. Jouni Filip Maho, 2009. New Updated Guthrie List Online (https://web.archive.org/web/20180203191542/http://goto.glocalnet.net/mahopapers/nuglonline.pdf)



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